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Fresno Planning Commission

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Jamie Holt, Chair

April 4, 2012

Honorable Clint Olivier
President, Fresno City Council
Members of the Fresno City Council
Fresno City Hall
2600 Fresno Street
Fresno, CA 93721

RE: Council Policy and Direction on Whether to Allow Non-Recreational Uses in "Open Space"

Dear Council President Olivier and Members of the City Council:

The purpose of this letter is to request clarification as to whether the City Council wants to allow non-recreational uses for what is otherwise designated as "Open Space."

By way of background, a conditional use permit application was recently presented to the Planning Commission on appeal that proposed to construct an open-roofed restaurant expansion into a portion of the Sugar Pine Trail, adjacent to the Via Montana shopping center, at the northeast corner of Champlain and Shepherd Avenues. This project raised larger policy questions as to whether businesses should be allowed to encroach into "Open Space" and whether or not any encroachment into such open space would be appropriate or desirable.

While the Planning Commission ultimately upheld the appeal and denied the conditional use permit on March 21, 2012, there is still an underlying question in our minds as to whether the City Council wants to allow non-recreational uses in what is otherwise designated as "Open Space." If the City Council is inclined to allow non-recreational uses in "Open Space", a city-wide policy and appropriate direction would be greatly appreciated. Staff has preliminarily indicated there may be a variety of potential options available to accomplish such a policy.

Sincerely,

Jamie Holt, Chair
FRESNO PLANNING COMMISSION